

12.538 SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS/MONITORS

Reference:

Procedure 12.715 - Property and Evidence:
Accountability, Processing,
Storage, and Release

Purpose:

Establish division procedure regarding the use of neighborhood surveillance cameras and monitors in districts.

Establish a division procedure regarding the operation, tracking, security, and maintenance of the surveillance system and tapes.

Policy:

The surveillance system is used to monitor criminal activity in a particular area. The system will not be used to infringe on an individual's right to privacy.

Video tapes are the property of the Cincinnati Police Division and are not to be duplicated and/or used without authorization.

Video tapes deemed to have evidentiary value necessary for prosecution of a criminal offense, will be treated as evidence.

Any maintenance or service of the surveillance system will be performed by an authorized service technician only.

Procedure:

- A. Officers will adhere to the procedures listed below when operating the surveillance system equipment.

1. Surveillance system equipment, installed at the front desk, is the responsibility of the officer assigned to the front desk and will be operated according to manufacturer's recommendations.
 - a. Desk personnel may be assisted by volunteers.
 - b. Any demonstration of the system must be approved by a supervisor.
 2. One copy of the owner's manual will be kept at the front desk at all times. Additional copies will be stored in the Administrative Office.
 3. Front desk personnel will immediately contact a supervisor to report any problems.
 4. Only a supervisor can direct personnel to reset the surveillance system equipment.
 5. Prior to the end of their tour of duty, desk personnel must determine the surveillance system equipment is working properly and bring any problems to the attention of their immediate supervisor.
 - a. If the surveillance system equipment cannot be reset, a blotter entry will be made indicating the date and time the equipment is placed out of service. The entry will also note a service representative has been notified.
 - b. If a service representative cannot be notified, a first shift supervisor or the Administrative Assistant will ensure the service representative is notified as soon as possible.
- B. Criminal Activity
1. Serious or violent incidents/crimes will immediately be broadcast by desk personnel.
 2. Suspicious activity

- a. Call Police Communications Section (PCS) to report the suspicious activity.
 - b. A follow-up MDT message will be sent to all district cars utilizing the MDST format giving an accurate description of the individual(s) and activity.
3. Blotter entries will be made for any arrest or serious activity captured by a surveillance camera.

C. Security

1. Video tapes

- a. Storage and security of the tapes are the responsibilities of the Administrative Assistant.
 - 1) Tapes will be stored in a secure area.
- b. Tapes will be changed every 24 hours at the beginning of first relief.
- c. Tapes will be rotated every 14 days.
 - 1) Tapes will be labeled Sunday through Saturday and rotated in daily order.
 - 2) Three spare tapes will be kept on hand.

D. Request For Tapes

- 1. Due to the rotation of tapes, any request for a tape must be made prior to the end of the 14-day retention period.

2. Division requests for copies of tapes must be submitted on a Form 606 to the district where the tape is assigned or stored. Any outside requests must also be submitted on a Form 606, through Records Section to the district maintaining the original tape.
3. Duplicate tapes will be made only after the approval of the district commander.
4. A tape control log book will be maintained at each district to track the location of copied tapes. Access to tapes will be restricted to supervisory personnel only.
 - a. The Form 606 will be maintained at the district for cross reference purposes.
 - b. The original tape must be retained at the district of assignment.
5. When a request for a tape is made from outside of the division, a second copy of the tape will be made and maintained in the file at the district for one year.
6. Court tapes
 - a. When tapes are held for court, the officer/supervisor will complete the Form 606 and the copied video will be processed in accordance with Procedure 12.715 - Property and Evidence: Accountability, Processing, Storage, and Release

E. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Supervisors will ensure:
 - a. All personnel follow established procedure for use of the surveillance system equipment.
 - b. Damaged equipment is repaired or replaced as needed.

- c. An adequate supply of blank tapes is maintained.